
T H E

C R I S I S.

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The PRINCIPLES of a REAL WHIG.



ANY books and papers have been published since the late revolution, tending to justify the proceedings of the people of England at that happy juncture: by setting in a true light our just rights and liberties, together with the solid foundations of our constitution: which, in truth, is not ours only, but that of almost all Europe besides; so wisely restored and established (if not introduced) by the Goths and Franks, whose descendants we are.

These books have as constantly had some things, called *answers*, written to them by persons of different sentiments; who certainly
either

either never seriously considered, that they were thereby endeavouring to destroy their own happiness, and overthrow her Majesty's title to the crown; or, if they knew what they did, presumed upon the lenity of that government they decried; which, were there no better reason, ought to have recommended it to their approbation, since it could patiently bear with such as were doing all they could to undermine it.

Not to mention the railing, virulency, or personal false reflections in many of those answers, (which are always the signs of a weak cause, or a feeble champion) some of them assert the divine right of an hereditary monarch, and the impiety of resistance upon any terms whatever, notwithstanding any authorities to the contrary.

Others (and those more judicious) denied positively, that sufficient authorities could be produced to prove, that a free people have a just power to defend themselves, by opposing their prince, who endeavours to oppress and enslave them: and alledged, that whatever was said or done tending that way, proceeded from a spirit of rebellion, and antimonarchial principles.

To confute, or convince this last sort of arguers (the first not being worthy to have notice taken of them) I set about translating the *Franco-Gallia* of that most learned and judicious civilian, Francis Hotoman; a grave, sincere, and unexceptionable author, even in the opinion of his adversaries. This author gives an account of the ancient free state of above three parts in four of Europe; and has appeared to me so convincing and instructive in those important points he handles, that I could not be idle whilst it remained unknown, in a manner, to Englishmen: who, of all people living, have the greatest reason and need to be thoroughly instructed in what it contains; as having, on the one hand, the most to lose, and on the other, the sense of their right to that, which hitherto they seem, at least in a great measure, to have preserved.

It will be obvious to every reader, that I have taken no great pains to write elegantly. What I endeavour at, is as plain a style as possible, which on this occasion I take to be the best: for since the instruction of mankind ought to be the principal drift of all writers,

writers, especially of history, whoever writes to the capacity of most readers, in my opinion, most fully answers the end.

I am not ignorant, how tiresome and difficult a piece of work it is to translate, nor how little valued in the world. My experience has convinced me, that it is more troublesome and teasing than to write and invent at once. The idiom of the language out of which one translates, runs so in the head, that it is next to impossible not to fall frequently into it. And the more barren and incorrect the style of the original is, the more shall that of the translation be so too.

I take this author to be one of those few that has escaped the envy of the snarling critics, and *personified* scribler,; and I make use of this occasion to declare, that the chief motive which induces me to publish this treatise to the world, is a sincere desire of instructing the only possessors of true liberty, what right and title they have to that liberty; of how much value it is; what misery follows the loss of it; how easily, if care be taken in time, it may be preserved: And if this either opens the eyes, or confirms the honourable resolutions of any of my worthy countrymen, I have gained a glorious end; and accomplished that in my study, which I should have promoted any other way had I been called to it.

I hope to die with the comfort of believing, that Old England will continue to be a free country, and *know* itself to be such; that my friends, relations and children, with their posterity, will inherit their share of this inestimable blessing, and that I have contributed my mite towards it.

The names of *Whig* and *Tory* will, I am afraid, last as long among us, as those of *Guelf* and *Gibbeline* did in Italy. I am sorry for it: but to some they become necessary for distinction sake; not so much for the principles formerly adapted to each name, as for particular and worse reasons. For there has been such chopping and changing both of names and principles, that we scarce know one from another.

I think it therefore necessary, in order to appear in my own colours, to make a public profession of my political faith; not doubting but that it may agree in several particulars with that of many worthy persons, who are as undeservedly aspersed as I am.

My

My notion of *Whig*, I mean of a real *Whig*, for the nominal are worse than any sort of men, is, that he is one who is exactly for keeping up to the strictness of the true old Gothic constitution, under the three estates of king, or queen, lords and commons; the legislature being seated in all three together, the executive entrusted with the first, but accountable to the whole body of the people, in case of mal-administration.

A true *Whig* is of opinion, that the executive power has as just a title to the allegiance and obedience of the subject, according to the rules of known laws enacted by the legislative, as the subject has to protection, liberty and property. And so on the contrary.

A true *Whig* is not afraid of the name of a *commonwealthsman*, because so many foolish people, who know not what it means, run it down. The anarchy and confusion which these nations fell into near sixty years ago, and which was falsely called a *commonwealth*, frightening them out of the true construction of the word. But Queen Elizabeth, and many other of our best princes, were not scrupulous of calling our government a *commonwealth*, even in their solemn speeches to parliament.]

And indeed if it be not one, I cannot tell by what name properly to call it: for where in the very frame of the constitution, the good of the whole is taken care of by the whole, as it is in our case, the having a king or queen at the head of it, alters not the case; and the softening of it by calling it a *limited monarchy*, seems a kind of contradiction in terms, invented to please some weak and doubting persons.

And because some of our princes in this last age, did their utmost endeavour to destroy this union and harmony of the three estates, and to be arbitrary or independent, they ought to be looked upon as the aggressors upon our constitution.

This drove the other two estates, for the sake of public preservation, into the fatal necessity of providing for themselves; and when once the wheel was set a running, it was not in the power of man to stop it just where it ought to have stopped. This is so ordinary

nary in all violent motions, whether mechanic or political, that no one can wonder at it.

But no wise men approved of the ill effects of those violent motions either way, could they have helped them. Yet it must be owned they have (as often as used, through an extraordinary piece of good fortune) brought us back to our old constitution again, which else had been lost; for there are numberless instances in history, of a downfall from a state of liberty to a tyranny, but very few of a recovery of liberty from tyranny, if this last have had any length of time to fix itself and take root,

Let all such, who either through interest or ignorance are adorers of absolute monarchs, say what they please; an English *Whig* can never be so unjust to his country, and to right reason, as not to be of opinion, that in all civil commotions, which side soever is the wrongful aggressor, is accountable for all the evil consequences. And through the course of his reading, though my Lord Clarendon's be thrown into the heap, he finds it very difficult to observe, that ever the people of England took up arms against their prince, but when constrained to it by a necessary care of their liberties and the constitution.

It is certainly as much a treason and rebellion against this constitution, and the known laws, in a prince to endeavour to break through them, as it is in the people to rise against him, whilst he keeps within their bounds, and does his duty. Our constitution is a government of laws, not of persons. Allegiance and protection are obligations that cannot subsist separately; when one falls, the other falls of course.

The true etymology of the word *loyalty*, which has been so strangely wrested in the late reigns, is an entire obedience to the prince in all his commands according to law; that is to the laws themselves, to which we owe both an active and passive obedience.

By

By the old and true maxim, that *the King can do no wrong*, no one is so foolish as to conclude, that he has not strength to murder, to offer violence to women, or power enough to dispossess a man wrongfully of his estate, or that whatever he does, how wickedly soever, is just; but the meaning is, he has no lawful power to do such things; and our constitution considers no power as irresistible, but what is lawful.

[*To be continued.*]

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